

LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
and the
LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of Joint Workshop Session held May 25, 2004

A joint workshop session with the Board of Supervisors of Lower Paxton Township and the Lower Paxton Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Chairman William Hawk, on the above date in Room 174 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Building, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

In Attendance

William B. Hawk, Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Gary Crissman, Board of Supervisors
William Seeds, Board of Supervisors
David Blain, Board of Supervisors
George Wolfe, Township Manager
Frederick Lighty, Chairman, Planning Commission
Richard Beverly, Planning Commission
Ernest Gingrich, Planning Commission
Denise Guise, Planning Commission
William Neff, Planning Commission
Elizabeth Sibert, Planning Commission
Lori Wissler, Planning and Zoning Officer
Dianne Moran, Planning and Zoning Officer

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Seeds led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Continued Discussion of Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Wolfe noted that the adoptions of amendments to the C-1 zoning district and amendments to the Business Campus zoning district have been accomplished. In addition, the new Sign Ordinance is moving very close to completion, and the Design and Development standards and the Residential Retirement District ordinances have been scheduled for public

hearings. Mr. Wolfe noted that by the end of June or July many of these projects may be completed.

Mr. Wolfe noted that a draft version of the proposed Lighting Ordinance needs to be reviewed by a consultant. He stated that the Village District zoning ordinance is in the second draft form and is before the Village of Linglestown Committee for their review. Mr. Hawk noted that the Village District ordinance was a very detailed ordinance. Mr. Wolfe explained that the original ordinance had been reduced to a far more workable document. Mr. Wolfe noted that the Pennsylvania Environmental Council was assisting the Village of Linglestown Committee with this project, but their contract has since expired. He noted that these two items could be completed this year.

Mr. Wolfe noted that the new Land Use Map shows areas that could be rezoned to Business Campus zoning. He noted that the Rezoning Map process is very cumbersome and time-consuming, but it must be completed.

Mr. Wolfe stated that there is tremendous community interest in the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) zoning district, and the Board of Supervisors adopted the Comprehensive Plan noting that this would be an overlay in residential areas that would possess a significant number of acres. He noted that the TND ordinance has not been prepared, and that there are five to seven developers who are interested in developing a TND Plan. Mr. Hawk questioned if several of the developers who wanted to do these types of projects have now backed out. Mr. Wolfe noted that he was unaware of this. Ms. Wissler explained that Mr. Yingst had plans for a TND, but he changed his plans to accommodate an R-1 district. Ms. Wissler noted that she was not aware of any other developers changing their minds. Mr. Seeds noted that Mr. Yingst was requesting a change from the A-1 to the R-1 to eventually get to a TND plan. Mr. Hawk noted that Mr. McNaughton has originally planned a TND in the Asper Woods area and

has since abandoned that plan, and keeping the area a R-1. Mr. Seeds noted that the costs to improve Patton Road to create a TND would make the project unaffordable. Ms. Wissler noted that several developers have considered a TND project.

Mr. Seeds noted that he was in favor of a TND overlay in the G-R districts. Mr. Seeds questioned if the Village of Linglestown would be a Village or a TND or a TND/Village. Ms. Wissler noted that originally, on the future Land Use Map, Linglestown was shown as a TND, but she did not remember if it would be a Village District. Mr. Seeds noted that the same changes would work for the Paxtonia area as well. Mr. Wolfe noted that it was the intent to prepare a Village ordinance that could be applied to Paxtonia as well.

Mr. Seeds questioned why the Township could not go ahead with the overlay district. Mr. Wolfe answered that there is a time and effort process involved. He noted that \$25,000 was budgeted to implement the new Comprehensive Plan. Initial conversations at Staff level with the Dauphin County Planning Commission resulted in discussion of hiring Mr. Mallard part-time to work on zoning amendments. He noted that an agreement could be reached with Dauphin County to hire Mr. Mallard to complete this. The other alternative would be to hire a consultant to do this project. Mr. Wolfe suggested that Mr. Mallard has worked well with the Board of Supervisors in the past and knows the area. Mr. Hawk noted that he lives in the Township.

Mr. Seeds questioned what the members of the Planning Commission felt, and if they would be comfortable working with Mr. Mallard. Mr. Blain noted that he missed the presence of Mr. Newsome at this meeting, since he was the instigator for this meeting. He noted that Mr. Newsome's major concerns were that he was disappointed that the Township has not adopted the Land Use Map yet, and that this had to be completed prior to reworking the zoning amendments. He questioned the members from the Planning Commission as to how they felt the process was moving along.

Mr. Guise noted that Mr. Newsome had expressed concerns about the way the process was moving forward to him. He noted that he was not sure of the sequence that Mr. Newsome was looking for. Mr. Guise noted that he was not sure that adopting the Land Use Map prior to amending the zoning ordinances was the proper sequence, but stated that it is important to move forward with the implementation of the new Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Hawk questioned if the map and zoning ordinances should be completed simultaneously. Mr. Guise suggested that the Board of Supervisors should move forward with a TND ordinance, and then the Business Campus. He noted that once the major components of the zoning ordinances are developed, excluding the overlays, then it would be time to move forward with the Land Use Maps, given Mr. Wolfe's warnings of controversy and the time entailed in completing the project. Mr. Guise questioned if the major components for the zoning ordinances have been completed. Mr. Wolfe answered that the major components have only been completed for the General Commercial and the Business Campus zoning districts as well as the nine standards to develop various recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan regarding pedestrian movement, landscaping, shielding, environmental issues, etc.

Mr. Guise questioned if the other zoning ordinances would require amendments. Mr. Wolfe answered that they would require a review, to be viewed in light of the new Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Wissler noted that Linglestown is shown as a Village, not a TND, on the Land Use Maps.

Mr. Wolfe noted his concern in that the vast majority of the Township's ordinances need a lot of work, and unless the Township hires a professional to do it all, he does not see how Township Staff could accomplish this project as one big adoption. He stated that if this project was completed in-house, with the budgeted \$25,000 for outside help, then it would need to be done piecemeal.

Mr. Hawk noted that if the Township would adopt the Land Use Map, and then follow-up with the amendments to the ordinances, then a builder could develop a tract of land under the old ordinances, which is what the Township does not want to happen.

Mr. Guise noted that Mr. Wolfe suggested one way to complete the project would be a step-by-step process of adopting a new ordinance and then designate the areas on the map. Mr. Hawk questioned what zoning area should be addressed first. Mr. Guise answered that the R-1 zoning should be addressed first.

Mr. Wolfe noted that it is staff's recommendation to complete the Business Campus rezoning and develop the TND. He noted that one would be map work and one would be ordinance work. He noted that completing the Business Campus rezoning would change the map and once that would be in place, then the TND ordinance overlay could be developed. Mr. Hawk noted that many people would like to see what a TND would look like.

Mr. Lightly questioned what a TND would look like. He noted that there are two types of TNDs. He noted that there is a TND that looks like a desert development with some open space around it, and then there is TND that looks like a little mini-town or Village. He noted that he likes the model ordinance from Belmont, North Carolina that Gannett Fleming shared with the Planning Commission.

Mr. Wolfe suggested that a committee be developed and assigned to specific topics like the residential district, using a staff liaison to assist in the preparation of a draft version for review by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Blain questioned if the committee should be made up of one member from the Board of Supervisors and two members from the Planning Commission. Mr. Blain noted that he would be happy to serve on that committee with Mr. Lightly. Mr. Guise volunteered and suggested that Mr. Newsome would be interested in this also. A question was asked if this subcommittee could consult with Mr.

Mallard. Mr. Crissman agreed that Mr. Wolfe should make contact with the Dauphin County Planning Commission to secure the assistance of Mr. Mallard. Mr. Wolfe noted that he would check into this.

Mr. Neff noted that the use of a Planner would add different planning techniques and designs to the project. He noted that land could be purchased for open space and the building rights could be moved to another piece of property, allowing for higher densities, and in doing this, the end result would be the preservation of open space without any expense to the Township. In return, the developer would be allowed higher densities while paying the fair market value. He noted that there are several techniques that a professional could suggest for discussion. Mr. Seeds noted that that would be an example of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). Mr. Neff noted that this allows you to shift the density to where you want it to be, based on roads, infrastructure, etc.

Mr. Wolfe noted that he would contact Mr. Mallard to seek his assistance. In addition, a TND Committee has been developed and Mr. Neff would investigate the TDR zoning concept. Mr. Wolfe suggested that maps could be prepared by use of GIS technology to show areas that would be proposed for the Business Campus Zoning. He noted that some parcels may only have a change in name in zoning designation; for instance, Transitional zoning to Business Campus zoning. Other areas would require a much more drastic change.

Mr. Lightly noted that the process could drag on for a while if it was done piecemeal. Mr. Wolfe noted that Lower Paxton Township is much bigger than most other municipalities in the state and what works for other Townships may not work for Lower Paxton Township.

Mr. Neff questioned if an open-space inventory of the Township had been completed. Mr. Wolfe answered that what is shown on the Comprehensive Plan in the Environmental Pictures mapping is the extent of the open-space inventory. Mr. Blain suggested that Gannett

Fleming would be able to research that information. Mr. Neff suggested that it should be done, and Mr. Blain agreed.

Mr. Wolfe explained that these maps are the product of the Act 537 Plan which shows site that are undeveloped that could be developed and have an impact on the sanitary sewer system. Mr. Neff suggested having the Staff Engineer review the large parcels for environmental constraints to see if these parcels are candidates for a TDR.

Mr. Hawk noted that the Rendell Administration has reactivated a Commission that was inactive for several years, the State Planning Commission. He noted that what they would be looking at is the Brookings Institute Plan, "Back to Prosperity," and the "10,000 Friends in Pennsylvania." He noted that this may have some impact on the local level. He noted that it may result in revisions to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Mr. Lighty noted that the Township could review the potential use for the Business Campus, identify these areas on the map, and rezone all these areas at one time. Ms. Wissler noted that this is the zoning type that currently runs the most interest with developers at this time.

Mr. Seeds questioned what should be done about the proposed GR-1, GR-2, and GR-3 areas. Mr. Wolfe noted that all the recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan would be reviewed and prioritized. Mr. Seeds noted that the TND would become an overlay in the R-1 zoning district. Mr. Wolfe noted that a TND would become an overlay in whatever zones you make it an overlay. He noted that it is more difficult to determine what a TND should look like, outside of where it would be located. He noted that the underlying zonings could be whatever you want them to be. Mr. Guise noted that these zoning districts are found on page 4-2 in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Guise noted that he did not think that the existing zone names had to be changed if they accomplish the purpose for which are called for in the plan. Mr. Seeds noted

that there are too many zones now. Mr. Crissman suggested that the primary assignment for the subcommittee is to come up with a definition of a TND.

Ms. Wissler suggested that the Sign Ordinance be completed prior to starting the TND Subcommittee. Mr. Lighty explained that it took over 500 formulas to computerize the sign ordinance.

There being no further business, Mr. Crissman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Blain seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Heberle

Approved by,

Gary A. Crissman
Township Secretary